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MARYVILLE, MISSOURI

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COUNSELING TEMPORARILY MOVES ONLINE



ILLUSTRATION BY MAKAYLA POLAK DESIGN EDITOR

SIDNEY LOWRY
News Editor | @sidney_lowry

Counseling through Northwest Wellness Services has switched to online telehealth appointments to reduce the risk of its employees contracting COVID-19. Nearly all appointments for counseling services were moved online Jan. 12 and temporarily will only offer online sessions.

Moving to an online service rather than an in-person meeting is at no extra cost to students or the University, and moving to telehealth is in effort to continue to see as many students as possible with a minimized risk of contracting COVID-19.

Due to rising COVID-19 cases in the county over the past few weeks, Northwest has been looking at data to determine what its next step will be when it comes to COVID-19 mitigation.

Assistant Vice President of Health and Well-Being Chris Dawe said the Wellness Center assessed what it could do to reduce risk for students and the Wellness Center and decided telehealth was a viable option.

"We believe that we can help to have less students coming in and out of the Wellness Center," Dawe said. "We have students spending significant amounts of time in enclosed space with a counselor, and then, you know, in comes the next student."

Though counseling has been moved to online only for the time being, all services are still available and free to all students.

"In many cases, you know, preferences are for those kinds of conversations to be in person. But the ability to manage risk for all of our students that we're serving, and, and as well as our counselors and other staff, we felt like this was the best step right now," Dawe said.

SEE COUNSELING | A4

Parson proposes pay raise for state workers

SIDNEY LOWRY
News Editor | @sidney_lowry
KENDRICK CALFEE
Editor-in-Chief | @calfee_kc

Missouri Gov. Mike Parson has proposed a 5.5% pay raise increase for cost of living adjustments and a Missouri minimum wage of \$15 an hour for all state employees.

Missouri state employees are some of the lowest paid workers nationally, making \$11.15 an hour, and are experiencing high turnover rates and many empty spots, according to the Associated Press.

Some state positions are facing turnover rates anywhere from 10% to 100% and vacancy rates from 30% to 100%, according to the Governor's website.

At the beginning of the year, a 2% increase was already given for cost of living adjustments, but the proposed 5.5% increase would be on top of the original increase.

Northwest acknowledged this proposal in an email from President Jasinski summarizing the Jan. 7 all-employee meeting.

He said Northwest is expecting to receive increased funding from the state.

"Further, we're going to do what we can to ensure all of our employees are receiving a minimum wage of at least \$15 an hour as Gov. Mike Parson has suggested for all state employees," Jasinski said in the email.

Assistant Vice President of Finance Mary Collins said in an email to the Northwest Missourian that at this time, no decisions have been made about who this wage increase is going to be affecting, where the funding for it will come from, or how many people this increase is going to affect.

It is unclear at this time whether the proposed change would affect student employees at Northwest.

The Missouri House of Representatives Budget Committee heard from the Parson administration's budget director, Dan Haug, Jan. 11.

SEE WAGES | A4

SEE A8 NORTHWEST MEN'S BASKETBALL



Northwest men's basketball junior guard Trevor Hudgins stares down Washburn senior guard Tyler Geiman during the No. 2 Bearcats' 71-63 win over the Ichabods Jan. 17 at Lee Arena in Topeka, Kansas.

Hendrixes awarded for Diversity, Inclusion excellence



SUBMITTED

In this submitted photo, Assistant Vice President of Diversity and Inclusion Justin Mallett awards Mark and Ashlee Hendrix for their efforts in promoting diversity and inclusion at Northwest.

KENDRICK CALFEE
Editor-in-Chief | @calfee_kc

Northwest's Office of Diversity and Inclusion honored two University employees Monday for their efforts to promote inclusivity on campus.

Mark Hendrix, University scheduling coordinator in Auxiliary Services, and Ashlee Hendrix, digital content manager in the Office of University Marketing and Communication, were presented with Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion Awards Jan. 17. Both employees were honored Monday at the conclusion of Northwest's annual Peace Lunch as part of the University's Martin Luther King Jr. Day activities.

Justin Mallett, assistant vice president of Diversity and Inclusion at Northwest, said Mark Hendrix is always will-

ing to help ensure students and their programs are successful.

"It doesn't matter if it's three days in advance. It doesn't matter if it's an hour before it's supposed to happen; (Mark Hendrix) always takes the necessary steps to make sure that students have what they need to pull off the program," Mallett said in a University media release.

Mallett said Ashlee Hendrix has helped to build a more inclusive community through her work in the Marketing and Communication Office and through the relationships she fosters with people of diverse backgrounds.

Ashlee Hendrix is an active member of the Ally Affinity Group, which looks to create safe spaces to share and process experiences.

SEE AWARDS | A4

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Northwest to keep multiple options for snow day policy



SUBMITTED

An estimated 6 inches of snow blanketed Maryville Jan. 14-15. Northwest has not announced any changes to its snow day policy from last year despite not purchasing Zoom software for the 2021-2022 school year.

JAKE PRATER
News Reporter | @JakobLPrater

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed how we use technology. There was a huge digital surge as companies and schools used technology for communications and meetings, as well as other virtual activities. But when the pandemic entered the winter of 2021, universities and schools had a question to face in an age of online school: Should we still have snow days?

Lt. Amanda Cullin, One of the heads of Emergency Management, wrote in an email to the Missourian that snow day learning options will vary; whichever one will be the primary choice was left unspecified.

"Fortunately, we have options," Cullin said in the email. "Remote (synchronous, like Zoom) and online (asynchronous, like Canvas) learning continue to be options."

Although for the 2021-2022 school year, Zoom is not required for the University.

The same platforms are used whenever students or staff are in isolation or quarantine as a result of COVID-19.

"The pros of learning options are Northwest's continued ability to adapt to the situation, in this case, incremental weather," Cullin said in the email. "We can focus on the safety of our community considering winter weather precipitation, freezing temperatures and changing road conditions."

This decision is somewhat similar to what other Missouri schools and universities have done.

Last year, the University of Missouri-Kansas City, the largest college within Kansas City, made the switch to remote learning on snow days. Truman State University also adopted this policy last year.

With several more weeks of winter ahead of us, Cullin wants the student body to know that it's best to have a plan and remember University resources, such as the Bearcat Food Pantry and Safe Ride.

County breaks COVID-19 record again

NATHAN ENGLISH
Managing Editor | @nathan_3nglish

A mere week after Nodaway County set a COVID-19 record for cases, it had done it yet again.

Seventy-two individuals in Nodaway County tested positive for COVID-19 Jan. 17, breaking the previous record of 71 set Jan. 10 and continuing the trend for Monday highs, locally. The county also has the most active cases, 235, since Dec. 8, 2020. The county also passed the 5,000 total COVID-19 case mark Jan. 14.

"We are kind of holding in this pattern," Tom Patterson, administrator at the Nodaway County Health Department, said.

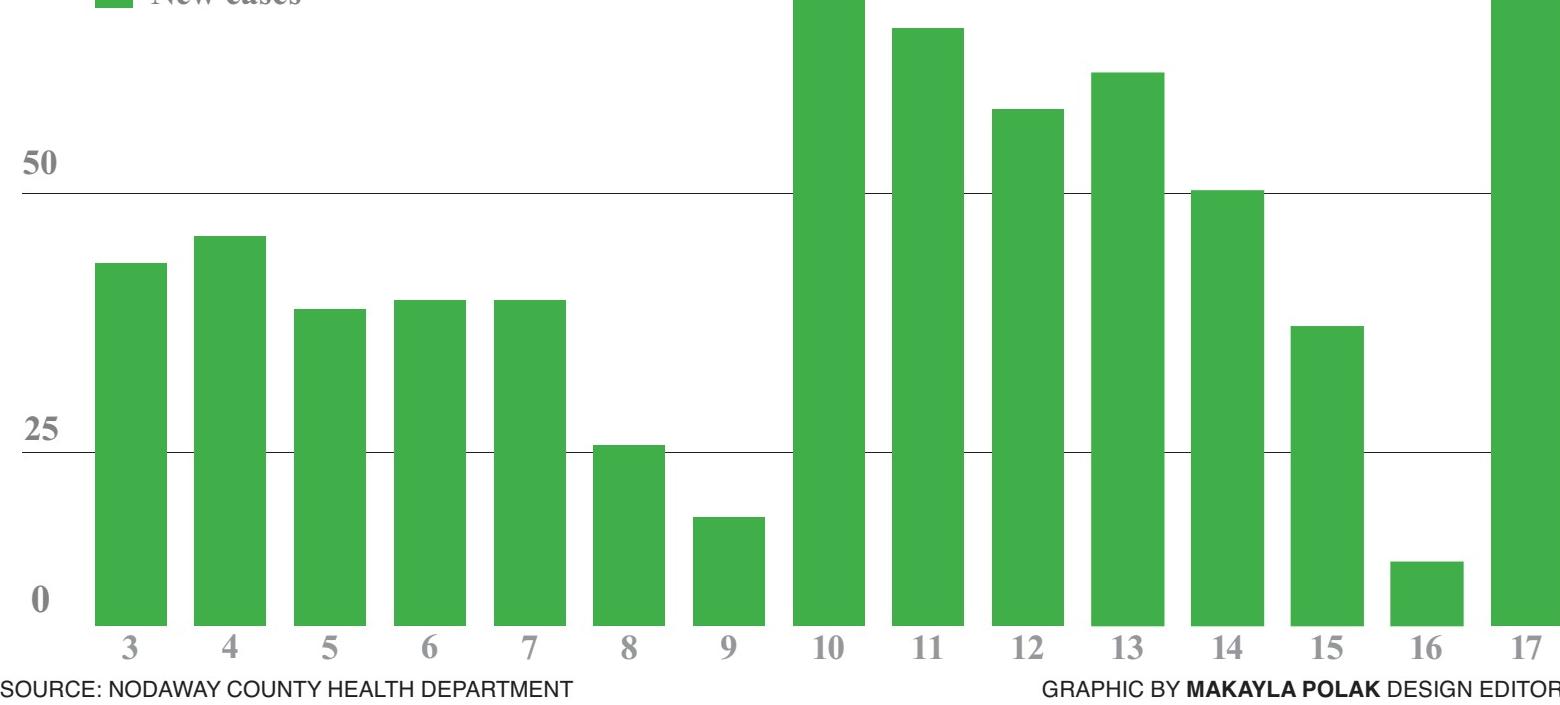
"You know, if we have 50 cases, there might be 400 we don't know about," Patterson said.

Cases at Northwest have increased at a similar rate. The University accounts for nearly 27% of cases in the county, according to the most recent data available at the time of publication.

Once again, Nodaway County is not alone in its recent spike; Missouri's seven-day rolling average for virus cases has jumped up 332% since last month. The U.S. has been averaging over 750,000 new virus cases per day over the last week. Dr. Vivek Murthi, U.S. surgeon general, said the omi-

TRACKING COVID-19: NEW DAILY CASES IN COUNTY UP TO JAN. 17

75



SOURCE: NODAWAY COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

GRAPHIC BY MAKAYLA POLAK DESIGN EDITOR

cron peak has likely not been reached yet in the country.

Nate Blackford, president of Mosaic - Maryville, said the spike is continuing to plague staff at the hospital and in the Mosaic system. Blackford estimates 20 caregivers are out with COVID-19 in Maryville, and 80-100

are out across the Mosaic system.

"We're stretched pretty thin when we have as many caregivers out as we do right now," Blackford said.

Bed availability is still a major concern for Mosaic and hospitals across the Midwest. Blackford said Mosaic - Maryville regularly receives calls asking if they have any available beds from hospitals in Iowa and Nebraska, as well as other Missouri hospitals.

"We have difficulty finding beds. So, that fact remains true and is of huge concern, but we are not seeing the corresponding demand for hospital services that we might have expected with the same increase in volumes, if that makes sense," Blackford said.

Although hospital rates have risen with the spike in cases,

they have not risen to rates equal to those seen under the alpha or delta variant, Blackford said. Studies still show vaccinated individuals are much less likely to contract severe cases of COVID-19 or possibly die from the virus than their unvaccinated counterparts.

The recent influx in cases is also affecting supplies that help treat COVID-19 patients. Missouri limited the supply of monoclonal antibody infusions due to high demand and a steadily decreasing number of infusions available, forcing the hospital to reevaluate who receives them and look at other avenues for treatment.

Early indications show the infusions are less effective on the omicron variant than previous variants. In the past, as many

as three monoclonal antibodies have helped patients suffering from COVID-19. Only one monoclonal antibody has been shown to be effective against the omicron variant.

To help combat other supply shortages related to COVID-19, president Joe Biden's administration has pledged to distribute free N95 masks and tests to the general population. Biden's plan calls for the distribution of 400 million N95 masks from the U.S. Strategic National Stockpile.

"At the end of the day, a lot of cases are spread by droplets, and masks prevent droplets. They prevent you from spitting on each other, and that's what we're talking about," Patterson said.

"Right now is the time to be smart; right now is the time to practice proper precautions," Patterson said.

The United States Postal Service launched a website Jan. 19, www.COVIDtests.gov, where people can sign up to receive free COVID-19 tests at their door. The tests are expected to begin shipping in late January. The limit is four per residential address.

Patterson said that with the spike locally, this could be vital in getting people the information they need. There may be an issue of self reporting, he said.

Amid the omicron spike, Missouri Attorney Gen. Eric Schmitt doubled down on his statements about school districts and mask mandates initially made at the end of 2021. Schmitt said in a written statement Jan. 18 that he would take "school district after school district to court" over mask mandates. Schmitt has already announced his candidacy for the U.S. Senate seat of Republican Roy Blunt in 2022. Blunt is not running for reelection.

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Local food pantries battle shortages

JAKE PRATER
News Reporter I @JakobLPrater

Winter is never an easy time of the year for the less fortunate. The cold temperatures lead to higher heat and energy bills, and thus less money for food. This year is no different for Nodaway County as the First United Methodist Church's food pantry enters the new year, which can prove to be a greater struggle with COVID-19.

Maryville First United Methodist Church's food pantry Director Merlin Atkins recalled the pantry's lack of consumers when the pandemic started.

"We got so much food part of the time. It was hard for us to get it out there because a lot of it was fresh food," he said. "But we threw very little of it away."

Atkins has been the food pantry director for 10 years and has helped with the food pantries in Nodaway County since they started up 23 years ago. Atkins said the church's food pantry serves 130-145 families monthly.

Other churches in the area serve another 100 families, and the food drive, which sees peo-

ple pick up food just as it arrives at the church from their cars, serves 180-190 families monthly, he said. All of this adds up to a lot of donated food coming out of the churches' food drive.

"We give roughly 4,000 pounds of food out each month," Atkins said. "So, between everything, we give out over 500,000 pounds of food each year."

The food pantry saw a significant drop in numbers last year. Atkins said 2022 could prove to be a difficult year for those in need due to rising prices and inflation. This will lead to an increase in people being served, as money will have to go to more essential things, such as childcare.

Atkins said the food pantry is lucky and blessed for all the help they receive from supporters and workers to help it serve low-income families.

"I like how Nodaway County is very, very, very lucky because we've got volunteers anywhere we do something," he said. "As far as I know, we'll continue to serve Nodaway County until the program is dropped."



ADDALYNN BRADBURY | NW MISSOURIAN
Volunteers Tracy Stone and Gary Weese sort through bread donations in the food pantry of the Ministry Center.

Northwest alumnus awards three scholarships at MLK Peace Brunch

KENNEDY KALVODA
News Reporter I @TheMissourian

Northwest alumnus Karen Daniel awarded three scholarships from the Karen Daniel Legacy Fund at the MLK Peace Brunch Jan. 17. The three scholarships were received by Darren Ross, Carlyn Carpenter and Mayowa Omolade.

Daniel established the fund in 2020 with plans to advocate for racial equality and social justice, as well as to enforce Northwest's goal of increasing Black student academic and social experiences to obtain a college degree.

Ross, a sophomore majoring in computer science, received the \$5,000 Claudia Daniel Trailblazer Leadership scholarship.

"I was astounded. I had high hopes because I performed well this semester and did a lot of community building things for myself and here in the DI Office. And I noticed a lot of people, in terms of faculty and staff, were looking at me about stuff about being inclusive, being profound about pushing out ideas, and being a part of everything," Ross said.

Ross said receiving the scholarship meant a great deal to him,

and he felt that his hard work had finally paid off because he said the acts that people do in class and school often go unnoticed.

"When I found out that I had received it, I was astounded because that means less stress for me to worry about and my parents have to worry about," Ross said.

Carpenter, a junior majoring in early childhood education, received the \$5,000 Alyce Cummins Future Educator scholarship.

"I was very excited. It was a relief honestly, to know that I was gonna basically have the rest of my college years paid for, and it was really an honor," Carpenter said.

Carpenter said the scholarship provides a reprieve in financial stress, and she also gets to focus the money that she's making now into her future endeavors.

"What I want to do is own my own childcare center, and in order to do that, I have to save because that's an investment. So I get to focus more towards goals that I want to do after college versus doing things for college," Carpenter said.

Mayowa is a senior majoring in international business. He received the \$5,000 Karen Daniel Leadership Scholarship.

"This scholarship means a lot to me. Firstly, it shows that my academic and extracurricular activities are seen and appreciated, and it also shows the spirit of giving back," Omolade said. "The scholarship was given by an alumnus because she saw the need for minority students to have a good balance of both academic and extracurricular activities, and you cannot achieve both if you do not have your tuition paid."

The three scholarships were awarded for the first time this year. Ross said he hopes they can provide hope and opportunity to many minority students in the future.

"Be who you need to be and focus up in class because it can pay off, and it will pay off in the end. Don't think that just because 'Oh, I have a 4.0 and I'm doing all of this and no one notices.' People are watching you. Faculty are watching you. Staff are watching you," Ross said. "I'm very grateful that I was the first recipient, but I also want to press the message that I hope to not be the only one. I want to set an example that this is possible for us, and anybody in the future can definitely get this as well."



SUBMITTED
Carlyn Carpenter, Karen Daniel, Darren Ross and Mayowa Omolade pose after Daniel awarded the three students with \$5,000 scholarships from the Karen Daniel Legacy Fund at the MLK Peace Brunch.

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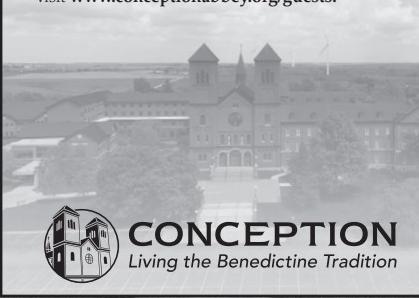
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MADDISYN GERHARDT | NW MISSOURIAN

Secretary Chloe Kallhoff, Vice President Hunter Grantham, President Bailey Hendrickson and Treasurer Jenna Lee-Johnson welcome back student senators as they begin the first meeting of the spring semester. Several senators were missing due to COVID-19.

Senate starts semester with empty seats

SIDNEY LOWRY
News Editor | @sidney_lowry

The first Student Senate meeting of the spring semester left the J.W. Jones Student Union Ballroom less populated due to senators being out because of COVID-19 and vacant representative seats.

"I know Covid is not going through Senate, but we have a lot of people gone tonight because of Covid," Secretary Chloe Kallhoff said.

Despite missing members, Senate continued with announcing all it has planned for the upcoming weeks, along with taking nominations for new representatives.

After the end of last semester, Student Senate was left with three open representative spots to be filled: senior class representative, sophomore class representative and an on-campus representative.

President Bailey Hendrickson asked senators for nominees for each representative spot, and Senate will choose who will fill each open position at the next meeting.

Though Senate lost a few members before the beginning of this semester, it also

welcomed two new people to hold committee chair positions.

Kaylee Snowardt took over of the vacant co-chair position for the Governmental Affairs Committee and Joe Connelly took over the co-chair position for the Student Affairs Committee.

After announcing the new positions, Hendrickson said Senate is competing against Missouri Western State University and sponsoring a campus-wide food drive from Jan. 3 to Feb. 3 to see which university can bring in the most donations.

All donations for the food drive will go to the Bearcat Food Pantry. To contribute to the food drive, all donations can be dropped off in a bin outside of the Student Senate Chambers on the third floor of the J.W. Jones Student Union.

Hendrickson said Missouri Western is currently ahead in the amount of canned food that has been donated, but she has reached out to people on the basketball team, Residential Life and more to get them involved in the competition.

The winner will be announced at the Feb.

5 Northwest basketball game against Missouri Western in St. Joseph, Missouri.

Student Senate will also be hosting a blood drive from 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Feb. 16 and 17 with the Community Blood Center.

Civic Service Chair Joseph Etheridge said that one of the contacts at the Community Blood Center said three of the center's blood drives have been canceled, so Etheridge stressed the importance of participation in the blood drive.

Other Student Senate Business:

- Student Senate will be sending four senators to the Missouri Governor's Conference Feb. 25-27 in Jefferson City.

- Senate is still accepting Rollover Budget applications. The application is available to students and organizations in Presence under the "Forms" tab.

- Student Affairs Committee announced the plan to have a social media giveaway on the Student Senate social media accounts along with a bingo and possible trivia night.

- Student Activities Council announced the spring concert will be April 8. SAC has yet to announce who will be performing.

CRIME LOG

for the week of Jan. 20

Northwest Missouri State University Police Department

Jan. 16

There is a closed investigation for a liquor law violation in Millikan Hall.

There is a closed investigation for a liquor law violation in Franken Hall.

Jan. 15

Alyna M. Thibault, 21, was involved in a single-car accident on College Park Drive.

Jan. 12

There was an accident between **Alexys Anderson**, 19, and **Macy Boydston**, 20, in Parking Lot 10.

Maryville Police Department

Jan. 16

A summons was issued to **Blake H. Miller**, for driving while intoxicated, a minor in possession and failure to obey a traffic signal on the 400 block of North Main Street.

There is an ongoing investigation for a lost or stolen license plate on the 31000 block of Sunset Drive.

There was an accident between **Casey J. Groom**, 19, and **Shane B. Rhoades**, 20, on West Ninth Street and North Mulberry Street.

Jan. 15

There is an ongoing investigation for a domestic disturbance on the 200 block of West 16th Street.

There is an ongoing investigation for harassment on the 300 block of Volunteer Avenue.

There was an accident between **Christian B. Chastain**, 26, and **David M. Chesnut**, 55, on the 300 block of South Country Club Road.

Jan. 14

A summons was issued to **Ryan A. Muskeyvalley**, 36, for failure to appear in court on the 400 block of North Market Street.

There is an ongoing investigation for harassment on the 300 block of East Summit Drive.

COUNSELING

CONTINUED FROM A1

Online services are not unknown to the counseling staff. Online counseling sessions became available in March 2020 in response to the pandemic when services went online and have been an option for students ever since. Assistant Director of Wellness Services - Counseling Kristen Peltz said that because of the shift nearly two years ago, the counselors are familiar with the telehealth service.

"We learned a lot about best practice and how to continue offering counseling, even when they couldn't be on campus," she said. "We discovered things we needed to adjust and also what worked well."

Despite meetings being moved to online telehealth sessions, Dawe said most counselors are not moving to work-from-home positions and will still be working in their offices at the Wellness Center.

He said that even though they will be working in their offices, online meetings are going to provide ways for counselors to adapt to continue to see students as COVID-19 continues to impact the county.

"Our counselors are also dealing with Covid, whether that's family, children in school and those kinds of things," he said. "It gives the flexibility to be able to also continue those services if they can't be here on site."

Peltz said some students chose to continue with telehealth services even when they were able to see counselors face to face.

"Now that telehealth has been introduced across multiple settings and people are familiar with it, we know telehealth won't go away," Peltz said. "Making it work for this campus and our students is the goal."

AWARDS

CONTINUED FROM A1

"By openly sharing about growing up in a Hispanic household, attending a predominantly white institution and finding her identity as a woman of color, she has helped many become aware of and understand the lived experiences

of people of color," Mallett said.

Mark and Ashlee Hendrix joined Northwest in 2016 and 2015, respectively. The two are married and traveled to Cancun, Mexico, for vacation following the Peace Lunch.

"Receiving this award just touches my heart," Ashlee Hendrix said. "The work the (Diver-

sity and Inclusion Office) is doing is changing lives, and that's something that I want to be a part of. I'm always more than happy to support that office in any way I can — it's so important to the mission of Northwest."

Northwest's MLK Celebration Week continued with a presentation by Rev. Sharon Washin-

ton Risher Jan. 18 at The Station. Rev. Risher, who was scheduled to give the keynote address at Monday's Peace Lunch but sustained a travel delay, shared the experience of losing her mother in the June 17, 2015, shooting at the Mother Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina.

MIDWEST MINIMUM WAGE BY STATE

MISSOURI

\$11.15 / HR

NEBRASKA

\$9.00 / HR

KANSAS

\$7.25 / HR

IOWA

\$7.25 / HR

ILLINOIS

\$12.00 / HR

GRAPHIC BY MAKAYLA POLAK DESIGN EDITOR
SOURCE: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

WAGES

CONTINUED FROM A1

According to a House media release, Haug said Missouri needs to take action amid rapid changes in the labor market.

"We're getting to the point where if we have more vacancies and turnovers, we're not going to be able to operate our state facilities," Haug said in the release.

Haug said some facilities with staff shortages, such as prisons and mental health facilities, have resorted to forced overtime to fill shifts.

Parson's plan is projected to take place Feb. 1 but needs approval from state lawmakers. As of Jan. 18, the House Budget Committee has not voted on the bill, House Bill 3014, which includes the proposed plan.

If the proposal is approved, the increase would cost \$91 million for the rest of the 2022 fiscal year ending in June, according to the Associated Press. The next year would cost \$218 million, and more than half the funding would come from general state revenues and the rest from other funding sources.

Alex Mausbach

Graduate forward reflects on winding journey to Maryville



Northwest soccer graduate student forward Alex Mausbach dribbles through the defense during the Bearcats' 1-1 tie in a scrimmage against Truman State Aug. 21 in Kirksville, Missouri. Mausbach netted a career-high 5 goals during the 2021 season en route to Northwest's third-place finish in the MIAA.

WESLEY MILLER
Assistant Sports Editor | @wesleymiller360

Bearcat Pitch — the roughly 120-foot patch of newly installed turf that lies a little west of the Carl and Cheryl Hughes Fieldhouse — has had many players practice and play on it since that plot of land was designated to the Northwest soccer program in 1999.

One of those players has played for the Bearcats for five of those 22 seasons and has seen the team at its lowest, including a program-worst 15 losses during 2018, and has seen the team at its best with a program-best 13 wins in her final season.

That player is Alex Mausbach. "I am just so grateful this is the way I'm going out," Mausbach said.

The Omaha, Nebraska, native has spent the past five years playing forward for Northwest soccer.

Her journey to the home field for Northwest began years before she even took sight of it.

Alex Mausbach first started playing organized soccer when she was five years old. Her parents signed her up for micro soccer, which helped spark her love for her sport.

Andrea Mausbach, Alex's mom, said she never complained about going to practice or a game, even when she started playing club soccer in sixth grade. It wasn't until eighth grade, though, when she truly found an interest in soccer.

"I played volleyball, basketball and did a little bit of dance here and there, but I basically fell in love with soccer the most," Alex Mausbach said.

"I played volleyball, basketball and did a little bit of dance here and there, but I basically fell in love with soccer the most."

-ALEX MAUSBACH

According to her mother, it wasn't so easy to find a place to play before high school, because of Alex Mausbach's desire to play other sports as well as soccer.

That was until the Mausbachs stumbled across the Elkhorn Soccer Club, roughly 25 minutes from Omaha. The Elkhorn Soccer Club and coach Anne Shafer were more than willing to bring Alex Mausbach in and allow her to continue to play other sports.

"They said she can play as

much or as little as she wants to," Andrea Mausbach said.

Then high school came, and Alex Mausbach was on another step of her journey.

At Roncalli Catholic High School in Omaha, Alex Mausbach experienced a situation similar to what she later experienced at Northwest.

In her first two seasons as a member of the Crimson Pride, the team had a collective record of 12-19.

"It wasn't until my sophomore year that my coach was really like, 'Let's do something here, let's turn this program around, and let's make a new history for Roncalli,'" Alex Mausbach said.

Coach Pat Stoffel's team did just that, and Alex Mausbach helped pave the way. The following season, her junior year, the Crimson Pride finished with an 11-8 record, and Alex Mausbach led the team in scoring with 19 goals.

In her farewell tour, the team made it to the Nebraska Class B State Tournament, or the final four, after finishing with a 10-6 record. That season, Alex Mausbach tied with her sister, Sam, for a team-high 13 goals, and Alex Mausbach was named to the all-state team for her efforts.

"I think I was too young to really realize what was going on," Alex Mausbach said.

Then, once again, Alex Mausbach was looking for a new place to play soccer.

She got in contact with the coach of the Bearcats at the time, Tracy Hosa, and was able to set up a tryout. But time went by after the tryout, and Alex Mausbach had waited for Hosa to get back with her, yet she got nothing.

"I think she was a little disappointed, and we tried visiting other

smaller schools, but she just really liked the campus and everything about Northwest," Andrea Mausbach said.

It got to the point, Alex Mausbach said, where she decided on being ready to set soccer aside if it meant attending her mom's alma mater.

"One day she just came to



Northwest soccer graduate student forward Alex Mausbach races a Truman State player for a loose ball during the Bearcats' 1-1 tie in a scrimmage against the Bulldogs Aug. 21 in Kirksville, Missouri.

me and said, 'Mom, I really like Northwest. I really want to go there, and I think I'm just gonna walk-on,'" Andrea Mausbach said. "I said to her, 'Well, why don't you try contacting the coach again?'"

As her mom suggested, Alex Mausbach emailed Hosa once more, and she said Hosa responded almost immediately that the team loved her and would be more than happy to have her.

"I was excited, but I wasn't exactly sure what I was getting myself into," Alex Mausbach said. "I knew it was gonna be a lot of work, but I didn't actually understand the culture or environment at all."

During her first season with the Bearcats in 2017, Alex Mausbach experienced a situation similar to what she faced in high school, with the team being stuck in rut when she got there.

Northwest finished with a 7-10 record on the year for its fifth consecutive losing season, but little did the Alex Mausbach and the Bearcats know, they'd have to go through a metaphorical storm in order for everything to eventually be sunshine and rainbows.

During the offseason, the Bearcats made a coaching change after Hosa's resignation from the position and hired Marc Gordon to be at the helm of the program.

Gordon said while some players were able to adapt well to the coaching change, Alex Mausbach truly stood out.

"For Alex, she was just super athletic and competitive, and she had the mindset to be successful," Gordon said.

And when it rains, it pours, similar to how it did in 2018 — Gordon's first season as the Bearcats' head coach. Northwest finished 2-15 and at the bottom of the MIAA.

"We hit rock bottom," Alex Mausbach said.

The following season, Northwest showed some improvement

and finished 6-10-3. Alex Mausbach scored three goals in seven starts and was looking to make a bigger impact in her senior year.

"Alex would always bring a spark," Gordon said. "She spent a lot of time junior year coming off the bench just because of her ability to change the game."

COVID-19 caused the following fall season to be canceled, and instead the team played in a shortened, unofficial spring season in 2021, when the Bearcats finished 4-3-1.

After the conclusion of the spring campaign, Alex Mausbach was left with a decision to make on whether or not to continue on with her soccer career at Northwest.

"It was kind of stressful because I was debating if I wanted to stretch out my undergrad or just stay until the spring," Alex Mausbach said.

"I didn't want to influence her, but I asked the question, 'What is your intent?'" Gordon said.

She decided to become a graduate student to continue her career in soccer, which ended up working out for her and the rest of the 'Cats. In addition to 15 shots, she finished

with the third-most goals on the team (five), including the game-winning goal against Fort Hays State in an overtime thriller.

Her contributions helped propel the team to a single-season program-best 13 wins and the program's first appearance in the Division II NCAA Tournament.

Alex Mausbach was able to go from almost not going to Northwest to being a part of the team that finished with the most losses in program history, and it wasn't long after that when she hesitated before eventually deciding to return for a fifth and final year.

"It's kind of surreal at this point," Alex Mausbach said. "I don't think it has fully hit what we actually did. I'm very proud of all the hard work that's been put in, and to go out the way I did is awesome."

Indoor track returns to action at Rust Buster

NATHAN ENGLISH
Managing Editor | @nathan_3nglish

Eight members and one unaffiliated athlete from Northwest track and field made the two-plus-hour trek Jan. 15 to Topeka, Kansas, for the Washburn Rust Buster to, well, bust off some of the rust that could have accumulated over winter break.

A standout from the meet, not officially on Northwest's schedule, was sophomore jumper and sprinter Joel Dos Santos, who took home first in the long jump with a jump of 7.24 meters in his indoor jumping debut. The Buenos Aires, Argentina, native's leap was good enough for an NCAA Division II provisional mark and was the sixth-longest jump in program history.

"I remember standing up, looking back and thinking, 'That one was really good,'" Dos Santos said of his medal-winning jump.

He was not the only Bearcat to etch their name into the record books at Washburn. Red-shirt-freshman distance runner Alyna Thibault ran a personal record of 5 minutes, 8 seconds and 76 milliseconds in the women's mile on Saturday afternoon.

Thibault came in fifth at the event and notched a performance that was enough to place her eighth on the program's all-time list. She beat her previous personal best by over four seconds, which she ran at the same venue 11 months prior.

"She's on a nice path," Northwest coach Brandon Masters said of Thibault. "I'm really excited about her weekend."

Thibault also placed fourth in the women's 800-meter run with a time of 2:21.25. Fellow Bearcat sophomore Caroline Cunningham placed second in the event with a time of 2:19.07.

The majority of Northwest track and field will make its 2022 competitive debut Jan. 22 at the Northwest Open in the Carl and Cheryl Hughes Fieldhouse.

"It's a good meet for us to learn more about where our team is currently after Christmas break," Masters said.

Indoor track and field is in a unique position among college sports. The schedule, Masters said, is 15 weeks of intense training, followed by winter break, followed by six weeks of the regular season — all occurring before the MIAA Championships.

"So, we got to depend on our kids taking winter break seriously, doing the job, staying in communication with them as best we can," Masters said. "But it's the Midwest. I mean, you know, all of December was pretty good, but January — not so good for training outdoors."

The team did host optional practices throughout break, which Masters said were well attended.

"That's the one where we can light it up and expect big numbers out of our kids," Masters said.

Masters, in his fourth year at the helm of the program, said he's excited to see numerous Bearcats get out and compete in what he said was "high-level practice with other people." Some will be like redshirt freshman Bailey Blake, who will be running for the first time all season.

The reigning second-team United States Track and Field and Cross Country Coaches Association All-American will be competing in the 800 at the upcoming meet, a race which Masters said was her "true event."

"I think last year, he was like, 'You're kinda meant for the 800; it's kinda your best event,'" Blake said. "So, I think that's probably what he means."

"The 800 takes a couple to kind of figure out how to race, but I'm excited for her," Master said.

Because of the timing of the meet, Masters said he doesn't expect everyone to perform their best, but he does expect some provisional marks, personal records and maybe even a few more names etched into the Bearcats' record books.

"At home, we always tend to compete well here," Masters said.

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UPCOMING GAMES

NW WBB

@ Central Oklahoma 5:30 p.m. Jan. 20 Edmond, Okla.
@ Newman
 1:30 p.m. Jan. 22 Wichita, Kan.

NW MBB

@ Central Oklahoma 7:30 p.m. Jan. 20 Edmond, Okla.
@ Newman
 3:30 p.m. Jan. 22 Wichita, Kan.

MHS GBB

@ Bishop LeBlond 6:45 p.m. Jan. 20 St. Joseph, Mo.
@ Cameron Tourney
 5:30 p.m. Jan. 25 Cameron, Mo.

MHS WRESTLING

MHS BBB
 vs. Savannah 7:30 p.m. Jan. 21 'Hound Pound
@ Cameron Tourney
 7 p.m. Jan. 25 Cameron, Mo.

MHS Triangular

5:30 p.m. Jan. 20 Maysville, Mo.

@ MEC Tourney

10 a.m. Jan. 22 St. Joseph, Mo.

WASHBURN
CONTINUED FROM A8

That's exactly what the Bearcats (16-1, 9-0 MIAA) did — made just enough shots. As much as it seemed like they'd make more than enough early on, that script quickly flipped.

Northwest used a 7-0 run to open the game before Washburn (10-7, 7-4 MIAA) got on the board courtesy of a 4-point play with roughly 15 minutes left in the first half.

Washburn's drought in the first five minutes was in part due to Northwest's stifling defense, led by redshirt-freshman guard Isaiah Jackson. The Ichabods' star players, a guard tandem of senior Tyler Geiman and junior Jalen Lewis, were held scoreless until Geiman nailed a 3-pointer 13 minutes into the contest.

"It's just a tough game. ... I feel like they were just really physical."

- TREVOR

HUDGINS

NORTHWEST MEN'S
BASKETBALL JUNIOR GUARD

"Coming in, we know what they did last year," said Jackson, who finished with 4 points and seven rebounds. "We scouted them and knew they're their main guys; we can't let them get going."

The duo, one that combines to average almost 27 points per game, wasn't going to be on the floor without leaving its impact on the contest. Geiman and Lewis helped the Ichabods climb back into the game on the offensive end, and a 2-minute, 25-second scoring drought from Northwest helped Washburn make it a 3-point game (27-24) with four minutes left until the break.

Hudgins, who eventually finished with a game-high 26 points — the 62nd 20-point game of his tenure at Northwest — was often flustered and frustrated by the Ichabods' defensive scheme. Washburn knew Hudgins was going to be a focal point of the Bearcats' game, just as he has been in every other game this season.

Hudgins, the reigning MIAA and Division II Player of the Year, was limited to 3-of-12 from the field in the first half and 9-of-23 in his 40 minutes of action.

"They're gonna try to get in close to me and have hands on me. I mean, I like it," Hudgins said of Washburn's defenders. "It's just a tough game. I'm just a competitor. I'm just competing out there. If you see me make a face, I'm just competing. I feel like they were just really physical."

It was the typical Northwest-Washburn game that fans have grown accustomed to seeing as of late — with the exception of last season's regional semifinal — and that meant the back-and-forth battle from the first half was sure to carry over to the second.

It did. Briefly.

The two teams traded scores before the Bearcats jumped out to a 42-32 lead, but it didn't take long for Washburn to make it a mere 4-point advantage for Northwest.

With a 47-43 lead and the ball, the 'Cats were trying to get a bucket to go, which would've halted a 9-2 run from the Ichabods.

But with the shot clock dwin-

dling down, Northwest sophomore forward Luke Waters passed up a wide-open shot from beyond the arc and passed it to Hudgins, who had no choice but to try a buzzer-beating heave from near half court. It missed, and Northwest sophomore forward Wes Dreamer was in Waters' face with words of encouragement almost immediately.

Walking back toward the Bearcats' bench due to a timeout on the floor, Waters was soon met by McCollum, who just wanted him to have the confidence to shoot the ball.

"I didn't say it that nicely," McCollum said through a laugh.

Waters did what he was asked to do — however nicely McCollum put it — and wasted little time doing so.

On the Bearcats' first possession following the timeout, Waters crept over to the right wing, where he stepped into and drained his first and only 3-pointer of the contest. That shot was the catalyst for Northwest to go on an 11-1 run en route to a game-best 14-point lead that was built by back-to-back 3-pointers from Hudgins following Waters' triple.

But regardless of what the Ichabods did for the remainder of the contest, despite getting as close as 5 points with roughly five minutes left in regulation, it wasn't enough — even if they held Northwest to 44.4% from the field, a figure that snaps a 10-game stretch in which the Bearcats shot 50% or better.

"I think the way they defend makes it really difficult for us," McCollum said. "It's a weird matchup for us. They're super physical, then they really attack the ball when you drive."

Now, with their 14th straight win in hand, the Bearcats will travel to play MIAA foe Central Oklahoma Jan. 20 in Edmond, Oklahoma, for the second installment in their three-game road trip.

Northwest was able to have an easy slate with the Bronchos last season, defeating them both times, including a 104-72 triumph in the semifinals of the MIAA Tournament. This year is different, though, as Central (15-2, 10-1 MIAA) will enter the contest on the heels of an 11-game win streak.

"I think they're just really, really good, offensively. They've got a lot of talent," McCollum said. "Probably the most talented team in the league — just top to bottom, got a ton of it. We'll have our hands full, that's for sure."

These mishaps allowed Hays to jump out to a 21-13 lead, Kearney a 20-12 lead and Washburn a 13-8 lead after the first 10 minutes of play.

Not all is lost, though. Through the three previously mentioned games, the Bearcats outscored their opponents 101-

Pettlon's game-winner against East Buchanans snaps losing stretch

CORBIN SMITH
Sports Reporter | @curly_corbs

With 15 seconds remaining in Maryville girls basketball's matchup with East Buchanan Jan. 18, the Spoofhounds were on the brink of losing their fourth game in a row. Bulldogs sophomore guard Hilarry Elifits eyed the north basket at the Hound Pound before sinking a triple to give East Buchanan a 50-49 advantage.

The home fans held their breath until junior guard Anastyn Pettlon received the inbounds pass and sprinted down the court and heaved a last-ditch layup to end the Spoofhounds' losing skid.

The ball danced on the rim before falling through the nylon, causing the crowd to erupt. And as the ball bounced away from the Bulldogs in the final seconds, the 'Hounds earned a 51-50 victory.

"It was interesting because we were so focused on Gracie (Kelsey)," Pettlon said about Elifits' late 3-pointer. "(Elifits) stepped up and banked it in. I had to take it down, and I made it, I guess."

Despite downplaying her team-high 24 points and game-winning shot, Pettlon and the 'Hounds (8-6) rode an emotional rollercoaster up until, and including, the layup.

Issues arose for Maryville in a couple areas, one of which being foul trouble. At the end of the first quarter, standout junior forward Rylee Vierthaler had two fouls. However, it didn't keep the team from taking an early 17-13 lead. After she tallied her third foul of the first half, sophomore forward Ava Dumke did her best to fill the void Vierthaler left on the court.

"Rylee has pretty big shoes to fill, you know. She can kind of do

SKID
CONTINUED FROM A8

The first half came to a close with the Ichabods in front of the Bearcats 26-20, marking the third straight game that the Bearcats were behind at halftime.

And for the third straight game, Northwest played like an entirely different team in the third quarter. The 'Cats outscored the Ichabods 17-9 out of the break to put themselves in front 37-35

OPINION
CONTINUED FROM A8

These mishaps allowed Hays to jump out to a 21-13 lead, Kearney a 20-12 lead and Washburn a 13-8 lead after the first 10 minutes of play.

Not all is lost, though. Through the three previously mentioned games, the Bearcats outscored their opponents 101-



SILVIA ALBERTI | NW MISSOURIAN
Maryville junior guard Anastyn Pettlon goes up for a floater during the Spoofhounds' 51-50 win over East Buchanan Jan. 18 at the Hound Pound. Pettlon finished with a game-high 24 points against the Bulldogs.

player in Kelsey. I mean, this is the second game in a row we've had a bank 3 go in during the last, like, nine seconds of the game."

During Maryville's three-game losing streak, two games were decided by 5 points or less and one came in overtime. In each of the games, Obley pointed out that the 'Hounds are capable of getting the lead, but finishing games is where they struggle. She wants the girls to learn from the streak and grow as the season continues. The victory against East Buchanan is a step in the right direction.

With 12 of the 14 girls on the roster being underclassmen, experience is something of a rarity on the team. Obley looks to the leadership of Vierthaler and Pettlon to keep the team motivated to build a new winning streak.

"Rylee and Anastyn bring such a great dynamic of competitiveness," Obley said. "So, while our record isn't necessarily where we might want it, it's just important that we continue to see the process and come to practice every day and work hard. If we continue to do that, the wins will come."

with one quarter remaining.

Unfortunately for Northwest, the lead did not last long into the fourth quarter.

For the next two minutes and 27 seconds, the Ichabods went on a 9-0 run to put themselves up 7.

Washburn's run ultimately kept the Ichabods in front for the rest of the game.

The loss for the Bearcats (11-5) marks their third consecutive loss following defeats from No. 16 Nebraska-Kearney and No. 2 Fort Hays State.

91 after halftime, which shows they can play at a high level.

There's still plenty to be happy about as a Bearcat fan. They've won 11 games for just the second time in nine seasons, surpassed last season's win total in just the team's first 11 games, are six games above .500, sit at seventh in the MIAA, have wins against two teams above them in the conference standings, and

The Bearcats will have a chance to end their losing streak when they travel to play MIAA foe Central Oklahoma (11-6) Jan. 20 in Edmond, Oklahoma.

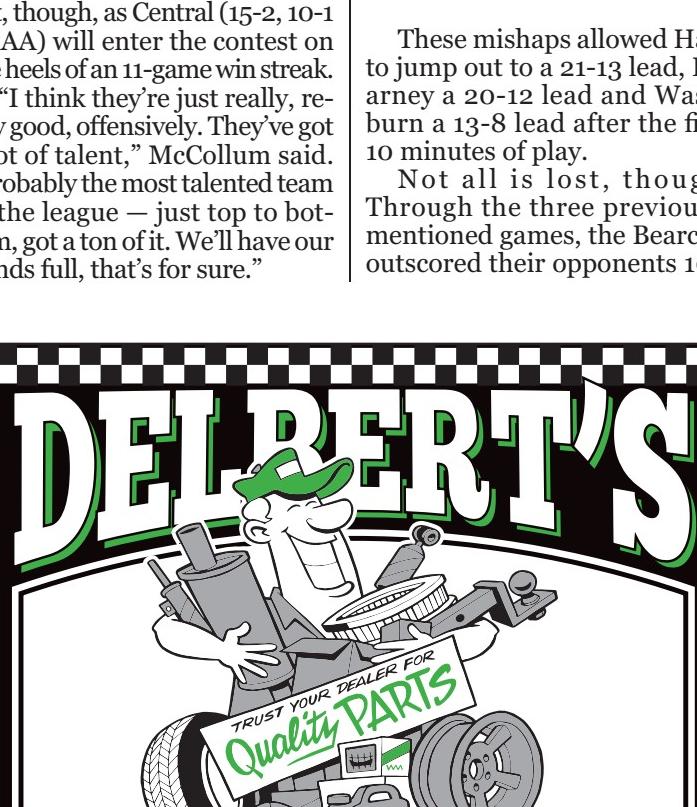
"They're one of the most talented teams in the league," Meyer said of the Bronchos. "It definitely doesn't get any easier for us, but we knew this was gonna be a tough road trip. As a program still trying to grow, we have to make sure we come ready to play, because if you don't come ready, it's just too tough of a league."

have a chance to increase that number against Central Oklahoma Jan. 20.

Northwest is going through a rough patch right now. But the season is far from over, and the Bearcats have already shown they can compete with any other team they step onto the court with.

After all, it's only January. Don't press panic until at least March, when the real madness sets in.

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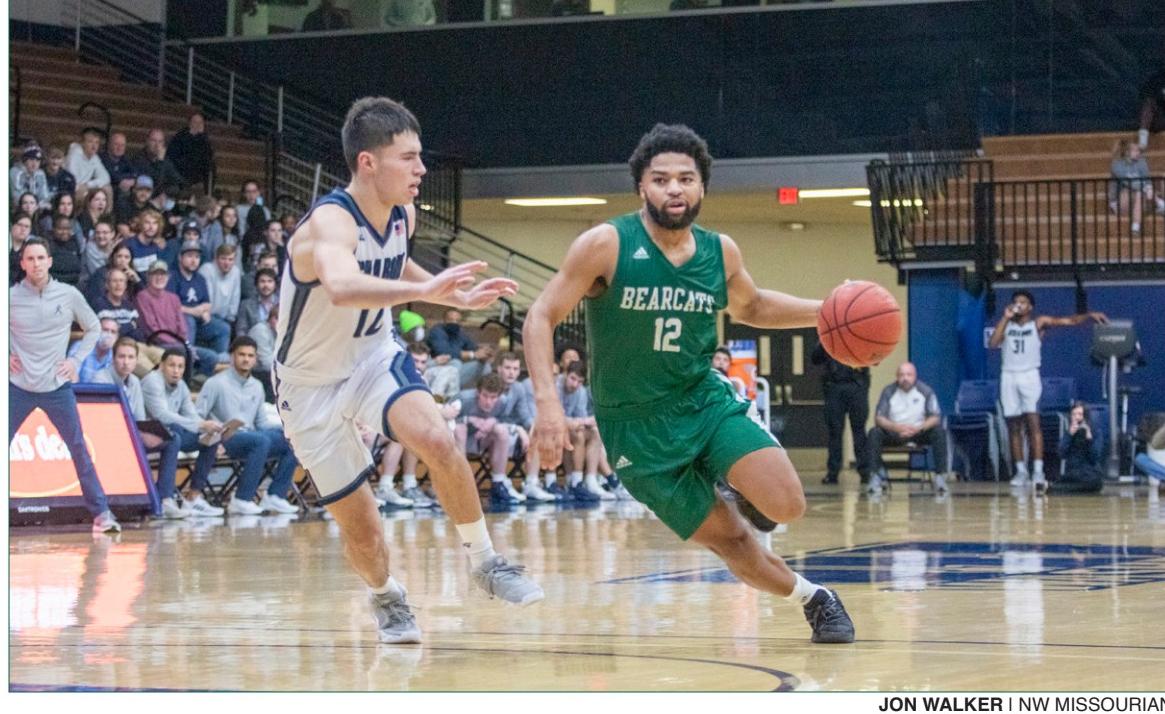
NW track and field makes 2022 debut at Washburn Rust Buster
see A6

SPORTS

Jan. 20, 2022 | @NWMSports

Maryville magic

MHS girls basketball beats East Buchanan on last-second layup
see A7



Top: Northwest men's basketball sophomore forward Wes Dreamer shoots a 3-pointer during the No. 2 Bearcats' 71-63 win over MIAA foe Washburn Jan. 17 in Topeka, Kansas. Dreamer had 18 points and a game-high nine rebounds.
Bottom: Northwest men's basketball junior guard Trevor Hudgins (12) drives past a defender during the No. 2 Bearcats' 71-63 win over MIAA foe Washburn Jan. 17 in Topeka, Kansas. Hudgins finished with a game-high 26 points.

No. 2 'Cats fend off MIAA foe Washburn to start trip

JON WALKER
Sports Editor | @ByJonWalker

TOPEKA, Kan. — A lot happened between Northwest men's basketball beating MIAA foe Washburn to clinch an eighth straight regular-season conference title Feb. 20 and the Bearcats' latest two-hour trek from Maryville to northeastern Kansas.

The two programs traded wins and losses, including the Ichabods besting the Bearcats in the title game of the MIAA Tournament before Northwest ended Washburn's season with

a 41-point win in the second round of the Division II Central Region Tournament. Oh, and the 'Cats won their third national title in five years, too.

But regardless of how much has happened since then, seemingly nothing has changed. The No. 2 Bearcats marched into Lee Arena roughly 11 months ago and left with a win, and they did the same thing with a 71-63 triumph over the Ichabods Monday evening.

"I mean, playing at Washburn is hard," Northwest junior guard Trevor Hudgins said in the aftermath of the 8-point win. "Credit

to our coaches for scouting them and having everything down for us. (The game) was anticipated, and we've still got that bad taste in our mouth from last year. We just competed today."

"They're really well-coached, a really good basketball team," Northwest coach Ben McCollum said of the Ichabods. "We knew we had to somehow control the game a little bit. I thought we were able to dictate a little bit of the game and make enough shots to be able to come away with a win."

SEE WASHBURN | A7

SEE OPINION | A7

Northwest drops third straight in road loss to Washburn

WESLEY MILLER
Assistant Sports Editor | @wesleymiller360

TOPEKA, Kan. — There were a mere 22 seconds left on the clock in Lee Arena as Northwest women's basketball faced a 3-point deficit against MIAA foe Washburn following a pair of made free throws from Ichabods senior guard Nuria Barrientos.

Northwest fourth-year coach Austin Meyer used one of his three remaining timeouts to give his team a chance to discuss what to do next in the hope of cutting into the Ichabods' 55-52 lead.

"Coach Meyer was just telling our team, 'We got to keep controlling what we can control, and that starts with communicating on offense and defense,'" Northwest freshman guard Peyton Kelderman said.

That's when Northwest freshman guard Molly Hartnett received the inbounds pass and

dribbled to the left wing, where she scanned the floor. A ball screen was set up on the right side of the paint, and Hartnett drove past it and down to the basket.

With the option to shoot it herself or pass it back out to Kelderman for a shot from beyond the arc, Hartnett elected for the former.

Instead of the ball traveling through the basket to make it a 1-point game, the shot missed its mark, leaving the 'Cats in a hopeless situation.

"We got to a pretty good spot and just weren't able to finish," Meyer said. "But, there was still enough time in the game that we didn't necessarily need a three, but just kind of like the entire night, we struggled to finish."

A trio of successful free throws later from Washburn all but sealed the game, as the Bearcats lost to the Ichabods 58-52.

Despite the result, the Bearcats (11-5, 6-4 MIAA) put

in a lot of work throughout the game to make it a 3-point deficit in the closing moments.

The Ichabods held a 20-9 lead over the Bearcats with seven minutes left in the second quarter.

Washburn went on a 20-5 run from seven minutes left in the first quarter to the aforementioned time in the second. Part of Washburn's success came from another slow start for Northwest.

In the first quarter, the visiting squad committed five turnovers, just two days after committing six in the first 10 minutes of action against No. 16 Nebraska-Kearney.

"Just felt like we weren't really aggressive," Meyer said. "I thought we passed up shots, we didn't make very good reads, and we just didn't make very good decisions."

SEE SKID | A7



Northwest women's basketball sophomore forward Paityn Rau fights through contact for a layup during the Bearcats' 58-52 loss to MIAA foe Washburn Jan. 17 at Lee Arena in Topeka, Kansas. Rau finished with three rebounds.

It isn't time to panic over the women's three-game losing streak



WESLEY MILLER
Asst. Sports Editor
@wesleymiller360

While the 58-52 loss to Washburn Jan. 17 might leave a bad taste in a lot of Bearcat fans' mouths, especially considering it is the third loss in a row, there is no need to press the panic button on Northwest women's basketball.

Yes, the Bearcats lost to a team with a record below .500 on the season. Yes, they were 18-for-55 (32.7%) from the field. But let's look at this closer.

Washburn went 0-2 against Missouri Southern (10-5) and Pitt State (11-5) and lost by an average margin of 16 points in those games. On the other hand, Northwest has already beaten Missouri Southern and Pitt State. Anyone can beat anyone in the MIAA, regardless of records.

Not to mention, Washburn has the league's second-best scoring defense and limits opposing offenses to the league's fifth-best clip of 38.5% from the field. The Ichabods are no pushovers.

Neither are the Bearcats, even after the loss.

The loss to Washburn was a mere two days after Northwest took No. 16 Nebraska-Kearney to the final minute of the game before the Lopers were able to pull away, and it was just five days after Northwest lost by 3 points to No. 2 Fort Hays State.

Of course, one must also not just wear rose-colored glasses when it comes to the Bearcats.

One of the more glaring things they need to improve on is the slow starts as of late. The Bearcats have led a mere two times in the first half of the game in the team's past three games, and both times were when they scored the first baskets of the game. Northwest has shot a compiled 26-for-68 (38.2%) through the first half in the last three games, and not many games are won at that efficiency.

In addition to the shooting struggles, the first quarter has been the Achilles' heel for taking care of the ball for the Bearcats, with a combined 15 turnovers in the first quarter of the team's three-game losing streak.

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